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OXC - 2466A

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MEMORANDUM FOR : Acting Chief, DPD

SUBJECT : Weather Support for DPD Projects.

1. During recent discussion with representatives of Air Weather Service Headquarters, I have learned that programmed changes in their weather reconnaissance activity will significantly reduce the quality of the weather support for missions over the Arctic region.

2. The OXCART concept of operations is based upon mid-air refueling over the Arctic region. Therefore, the operation will be dependent upon accurate and timely weather data from that area. Since the weather reconnaissance program is one of the primary sources of this data, I believe that any reduction in the effectiveness of that program should be a matter of concern to DPD headquarters.

3. The real problem results from the relatively low priority of the weather reconnaissance program. Because of this, the WB-47's which are programmed to replace the present WB-50's in 1963 will not be equipped to transmit weather data while a mission is in progress. The present WB-50's carry radio operators who transmit the weather data back to Eielson AFB, for relay to WECEN. The WB-47's carry no radio operator. The data can not be forwarded to WECEN until the aircraft lands; thus a delay of approximately eight hours ensues.

4. Components for an airborne meteorological data handling system have been developed and can be adapted to the WB-47. This system would enable them to transmit weather data automatically while in flight. However, because of the low priority assigned to the further development of this equipment it has not been programmed for the WB-47 weather reconnaissance fleet.

USAF review(s) completed.

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5. An Air Weather Service representative will brief officials of Headquarters USAF on this problem on Tuesday, 24 October. This will be a last ditch attempt to justify their request to have the WB-47's equipped with an automatic data handling system. Since the USAF decision on this matter will affect Project OXCART, I suggest that the problem be called to the attention of Colonel Leo P. Geary, AFMIG-5. The accompanying memorandum has been prepared for that purpose.

signed

[Redacted Signature Box]

DPD/C/AWS

DPD/C/AWS: [Redacted Box] (18 Oct 1961)

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